



PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES

SIGNAGE STANDARDS

GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose and intent of the City Signage Standards is to enhance the visual environment of residential, commercial, and industrial areas while promoting commerce, traffic safety, and community identity. The signage standards shall apply to all development within the City, unless specifically exempted by City code or ordinance. A permit is required for any on-premises sign that is erected, re-erected, constructed, painted, posted, applied or structurally altered. Planning and Building Services shall review sign permit applications.

This handout serves as a brief overview on City Signage Standards, for more information on specific requirements, please refer to the City of Liberty Lake Development Code.

DEFINITIONS

Signage Definitions. The following definitions are contained within the City Development Code Article 10-1C. Please consult the Development Code for additional definitions.

- **Billboards** - Outdoor Advertising signs containing a message, commercial or otherwise, unrelated to any use or activity of the property on which the sign is located.
- **Electronically Changeable Message Sign** - A sign upon which graphics, symbols or words can be varied upon the face or faces of a sign by a computer controller to display time, temperature, public service, community service, and commercial information.
- **Facade** - The portion of the front exterior elevation on the building extending from grade to the top of the parapet, wall or eaves and extending the entire length of the building.
- **Flashing Sign** - An electrical sign or portion thereof which changes light intensity in a brief, brilliant, or sudden and transient outburst of light causing a steady on and off, glittering, sparkling, or scintillating pattern. (This definition shall not include electronically changeable message signs or signs which simulate motion for mood lighting purposes in which no more than one-third 1/3 of the changing light source is off at any time.)
- **Freestanding Sign** - A sign not attached to or forming part of a building. A Freestanding Sign, as used in Article 10-3E, must have at least 50% of the width of the sign constructed in a monument style (also see Monument Sign).
- **Frontage** - The dimension of a property line abutting a public or private street.
- **Interchange Corridor** - The area 1500 feet prior to the ingress and egress points east and west bound for the City on the I-90 right-of-way.

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- **Interstate 90 Corridor** - That portion delineated as being 250 feet beyond either side of the I-90 right-of-way that is between the east and west boundaries of the City.
- **Monument Sign** - A sign not attached to or forming part of a building constructed as a solid structure or one which gives the appearance of a continuous, non-hollow, unbroken, mass.
- **Portable Sign** - Any sign which is not permanently affixed and is designed for or capable of being moved, except those signs explicitly designed for people to carry on their person.
- **Private Off-premises Directional Sign** - A permanently installed sign that provides directional information to business(es) located within the City of Liberty Lake, but not located on the same parcel as the business(es).
- **Readerboard** - A sign face consisting of tracts to hold readily changeable letters allowing frequent changes of copy.
- **Roof Sign** - A sign supported by and erected on and/or above a roof, wall, or parapet of a building or structure.
- **Sign** - Any visual communication device, structure, or fixture which is visible from any right-of-way and is intended to aid the establishment in question in promoting the sale of products, goods, services, or events, or to identify a building using graphics, letters, figures, symbols, trademarks or written copies. Painted wall designs or patterns, which do not represent a product, service or registered trademark or which do not identify the user, shall not be considered signs. If a design or pattern is combined with a sign, only that part of the design or pattern, which cannot be distinguished from the sign, will be considered as part of the sign. This definition does not include billboards or video boards.
- **Video Board** - Video board or moving picture board/screen is a large format display showing active or moving or animated images over most or all of the display surface and which has advertising images that are discernible from a moving vehicle on a public right of way.
- **Wall Sign** - A nonpaper sign attached or erected parallel to and extending not more than fifteen (15) inches from the facade or face of any building to which it is attached and supported throughout its entire length, with the exposed face of the sign parallel to the plane of said wall or facade.

PROHIBITED SIGNS

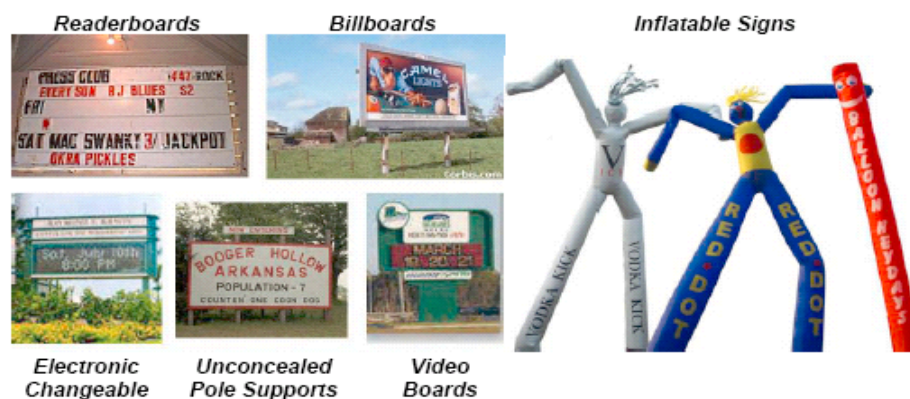
Signs Prohibited in the City. The following signs are prohibited in all zones unless otherwise specifically permitted.

- Signs, which by coloring, lighting, shape, wording or location resemble or conflict with traffic control signs or devices.
- Signs that create a safety hazard for pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- Flashing signs.
- Flashing or neon lighting used as an alternative to signage. Exposed neon on signs.
- Portable signs exceeding six (6) square feet.
- Readerboards signs (except as permitted herein).
- All freestanding electronically changeable message signs.
- Signs attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer parked on public or private property, provided that this provision shall not be construed as prohibiting the identification of a firm or its product on a vehicle operating during the normal course of business. Franchised buses and taxis are exempt from these provisions.

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- Roof signs.
- Freestanding Signage with unconcealed pole supports.
- Video Boards.
- Billboards.
- Signs attached to towers or wireless communication support towers.
- Inflatable signs.
- A-frame signs (except as permitted herein).
- Signs attached to benches that advertise businesses, goods, services, etc.
- Signage in residential areas (except as permitted herein).
- Temporary signage (except as permitted herein).

Examples of Prohibited Signage:



SIGN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Exempt Signs. The following shall not require a sign permit provided that these exemptions shall not be construed as relieving the owner from the responsibility to comply with the provisions of the Development Code or any other law or ordinance, including the Building Code.

- Signs that are attached to buildings provided such signs are not more than four (4) sq. ft. in area and project not more than 2 inches from any building surface.
- The changing of the advertising copy or message on a lawfully erected sign, readerboard, or similar sign specifically designed for replaceable copy.
- Painting, repainting, or normal maintenance, unless a structural or electrical change is made.
- Incidental signs.
- Any sign located within a building not visible from the street or sidewalk.
- Temporary pennants or signs for annual City events (e.g. Farmer's Market, Pavillion Park Summer Festival, Pet Day in the Park, Liberty Lake Kite Festival, Clean Green Day).

Temporary Signs. The following shall not require a complete sign permit application, however application for a temporary sign permit shall be required. All signage over 8 ft. in height or over 32 sq. ft. in size will need engineering (IBC 2006 Section 106).

- Temporary banners and temporary signs as permitted herein.
- Real estate signs as permitted herein.
- Temporary political signs.

Required Submittals for Sign Permits.

- Completed & Signed Application
- Plans for the signs with dimensions
- Building elevations with dimensions (wall signs)
- Setbacks (freestanding / monument signs)
- Site Map (freestanding / monument signs)
- Attachment Illustration (wall signs)
- Engineering (freestanding / monument signs, as applicable) - All signage over 8 ft. in height or over 32 sq. ft. in size will need engineering (IBC 2006 Section 106).

SIGNS PERMITTED IN ALL ZONES IN CONNECTION WITH SPECIFIC USES

The following signs may be permitted in any zone, subject to the limitations as provided herein.

Temporary Banners, Flags, Pennants and Searchlights -

- A temporary banner, flag, or pennant may be permitted for by the Planning and Community Development Director for temporary on-premises use not exceeding thirty (30) days in any one year for special events such as grand openings, provided that such display does not have an adverse impact on nearby residences or institutions and banners shall not exceed 75 square feet in size. Except for properties within the Interstate 90 Corridor where 150 square feet shall be the maximum size.
- A temporary sign permit application must be submitted and approved for all temporary signage, prior to signage installation.
- A searchlight may be permitted by the Planning and Community Development Director for temporary on-premises use only not exceeding three (3) days in any one year for special events such as grand openings, provided that such display does not have an adverse impact on nearby residences or institutions. A temporary sign permit application must be submitted and approved for all temporary signage, prior to signage installation.

Temporary Construction Site Signs - One on premises construction sign that identifies the future use of a site, architects, engineers, contractors, financial institutions, and other individuals or firms involved with the construction of a project, may be approved under the following conditions:

- The sign shall be a maximum area of thirty-two (32) square feet and shall not exceed six (6) feet above grade of the lot or parcel on which the sign is located.
- The sign shall not include advertisement of any products, during the actual construction period.
- The sign shall be removed prior to an occupancy permit being issued.
- A temporary sign permit application must be submitted and approved for all temporary signage, prior to signage installation.

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- **Temporary Real Estate Wall Signs** - Within all zones, excluding Residential Properties / Uses, a temporary real estate sign located on a wall or in a window advertising the prospective sale, lease or rental of the building, property or premises shall be permitted, subject to the following conditions:
 - The sign shall be located on the premises being sold or leased.
 - The banner or wall sign shall be flush mounted to the building wall surface below the roof eave and oriented to minimize visual exposure to existing residential areas.
 - The sign shall be non-illuminated.
 - The sign shall not exceed a maximum ratio of: 1 square foot of signage per 10 square feet of building façade (sign area: building facade) up to a maximum area of 150 square feet.
 - A temporary sign permit application shall be submitted and approved for all temporary signage, prior to signage installation.
 - The sign shall remain only as long as property remains unsold or un-leased for a period not to exceed one (1) year. The Planning and Community Development Director may extend the one (1) year time period upon written request by the owners/ developers of the project.
- **Temporary Real Estate Freestanding Signs (Residential Properties / Uses)** - A temporary real estate sign advertising the prospective sale, lease or rental of the building, property or premises shall be permitted, subject to the following conditions:
 - The sign shall be located on the premises being sold or leased.
 - Only 1 sign per frontage road, per parcel shall be permitted.
 - The sign shall be non-illuminated.
 - The sign shall be limited in size to five (5) square feet and limited in height to six (6) feet above grade. A sixteen (16) square foot sign limited in height to six (6) feet above grade is allowed on property of five (5) acres or more, with or without a dwelling on-site.
 - A temporary sign permit application must be submitted and approved for all temporary signage, prior to signage installation.
 - The sign shall remain only as long as property remains unsold or un-leased for a period not to exceed one (1) year. The Planning and Community Development Director may extend the one (1) year time period upon written request by the owners/ developers of the project.
- **Temporary Real Estate Freestanding Signs (Commercial & Industrial Properties / Uses)** - A temporary real estate sign advertising the prospective sale, lease or rental of the building, property or premises shall be permitted, subject to the following conditions:
 - The sign shall be located on the premises being sold or leased.
 - Only 1 sign per frontage road, per parcel shall be permitted.
 - The sign shall be non-illuminated.
 - The sign shall be limited in size to sixteen (16) square feet and limited in height to six (6) feet above grade on sites less than one (1) acre. A thirty two (32) square foot sign limited in height to six (6) feet above grade is allowed on property of one (1) acre or more. Within the Interstate 90 Corridor, the sign shall be limited in size to ninety six (96) square feet and limited in height to sixteen (16) feet.
 - A temporary sign permit application must be submitted and approved for all temporary signage, prior to signage installation. All signage over 8 ft. in height or over 32 sq. ft. in size will need engineering (IBC 2006 Section 106).
 - The sign shall remain only as long as property remains unsold or un-leased for a period not to exceed one (1) year. The Planning and Community Development Director may extend the one (1) year time period upon written request by the owners/ developers of the project.

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- **Real Estate Open House/ Directional Sign** -

- Temporary open house/ directional sign(s) shall be allowed on the access street(s) to property that is for sale, lease, or rent while that property is open for inspection during an otherwise advertised "open house" or similar, non-recurring event. A maximum of three (3) open house / directional signs may be used for such "open house".
- Such sign(s) shall not be placed in such a manner as to interfere with vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- The sign shall be non-illuminated.
- Such signs may be in an A-board form if they are otherwise in compliance with this Code and the standards within this subsection.
- Such sign(s) shall be limited in size to five (5) square feet and limited in height to three (3) feet above grade.
- Such sign(s) shall not be considered temporary if advertising the same property, or portions thereof, for more than two (2) consecutive days, remains in place overnight, or is utilized for more than ten (10) days in any calendar month.
- The above standards shall also apply to the advertisement of designated model homes or subdivision sales offices.
- A temporary sign permit application must be submitted and approved for all temporary signage, prior to signage installation / use.
- Any sign(s) not in compliance with the above standards shall be impounded by the City at the expense of the individual or entity advertising the sale of the property.

- **Bulletin Boards** - Bulletin boards may be permitted on the premises of public, charitable or religious institutions, subject to the following:

- Such sign shall contain not more than thirty-two (32) square feet in area on a face and may be double-faced.
- No part of the sign shall exceed a height of six (6) feet above the grade.
- The sign, if lighted, shall use low-intensity lighting.

- **Permanent Residential Subdivision or Area Name Signs** - Decorative subdivision or area name signs of a permanent character at the street entrance or entrances to the subdivision or area which identifies the name of the subdivision or area only, shall be permitted, subject to the following conditions:

- The sign shall be designed to achieve aesthetic harmony with the identifying neighborhood
- The sign shall consist of decorative masonry walls, concrete, rock or wood with illuminated, indirectly lighted or non-illuminated name plates or letters
- The sign shall be located in a maintained landscaped area.
- All signage over 8 ft. in height or over 32 sq. ft. in size will need engineering (IBC 2006 Section 106).

Examples of Permitted Signage:



Real Estate Sign -
Temporary sign advertising a sale of property,
5 acre + property, 16 sq. ft. max. size, and
6 ft. max height above grade

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Construction Site Sign -
Temporary sign removed prior to occupancy,
Identifying the future use of a site,
32 sq. ft. max size, and
6 ft. max height above grade



Temporary Banners, Flags, Pennants, and Searchlights -
Temporary use that must be permitted for by the Planning
& Community Development Director 30 day max use.
Display cannot have an adverse impact on nearby
residences or institutions



**Permanent Residential Subdivision or Area Name
Signs -**
Decorative subdivision or area name signs of a
permanent character at the street entrance or
entrances to the subdivision or area which identifies
the name of the subdivision or area only, designed to
achieve aesthetic harmony with the identifying

neighborhood, consist of decorative masonry walls, concrete, rock, or wood.
Sign must have indirectly lighted or non-illuminated name plates or letters Sign must be
located in a maintained landscaped area.

SIGNS STANDARDS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Sign structures are permitted in the residential zones in accordance with the following uses and standards:

- **Nameplates.** A nameplate, which indicates no more than the name and address of the occupant of the premises, is permitted, provided that such sign shall not exceed a maximum area of three (3) square feet.
- **Permitted Signs by Use.** The following categories of uses are defined to apply to signage standards provided in Tables 1 and 2 on Page 8:
 - Semi-Public uses include a church, public park, multiple-family dwelling, dormitory, fraternity, sorority, nursing home, retirement apartment, public building, child day-care center, family day-care provider, nonprofit community hall or lodge, animal clinic, cemetery, sanitarium.
 - School/Public uses include a school (kindergarten through university), hospital, police station, fire station, post office or public golf course, incinerator, solid waste recycling transfer site, or landfills.
 - Office uses include a business or professional office.
 - Commercial Use/Other shall include commercial uses other than those listed in above and other than home industry or home profession.
- **Wall Signs.** On-Premises wall signs are permitted not to exceed the maximum number and size as shown in Table 1 on Page 8. Wall signs shall be unlighted or have low-intensity lighting, and shall be placed flat against the outside wall of the main building.

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TABLE 1 Use	Max # of Signs	Max Sign Area
Semi-Public	1	10 sq. ft.
Schools/Public Use	1	20 sq. ft.
Office	1*	16 sq. ft.**
Commercial Uses, Other	1	20 sq. ft.

*Multiple office complexes shall be allowed one wall sign per building.

**An office building containing four (4) or more offices shall be allowed a maximum aggregate sign area of 64 sq. ft.

Monument Signs. On-Premises monument signs are permitted not to exceed the maximum number, size, and height as shown in Table 2 below. On-Premises monument signs shall be unlighted or have low-intensity lighting. All signage over 8 ft. in height or over 32 sq. ft. in size will need engineering (IBC 2006 Section 106).

TABLE 2 Use	Max # of Signs	Max Sign Area	Max Sign Height
Semi-Public	1	16 sq. ft.	6 feet
Schools/Public Use	1	32 sq. ft.	6 feet
Office	1	32 sq. ft.	6 feet
Commercial Uses, Other	1	32 sq. ft.	6 feet

SIGNS STANDARDS FOR OTHER ZONES

Any sign which pertains only to the identification of a permitted use in any zone, except for residential zones, and is located entirely on the property with the use or business, is permitted, provided that it complies with the following conditions:

Wall Signs – Individual and Multiple Businesses. Wall signs for businesses are permitted on each wall of a building and for each business located entirely on the property provided the aggregate area for wall signage on any one (1) property or any one (1) building does not exceed a maximum ratio of: 1 square foot of signage per 10 square feet of building façade (sign area:building facade) up to a maximum area of 150 square feet. Except for properties within the Interstate 90 Corridor where 300 square feet shall be the maximum aggregate signage area. In the case of properties with Interstate 90 exposure, the maximum size for signage on walls not facing Interstate 90 shall be 150 square feet. Businesses in strip commercial type structures shall be calculated separately based on their individual frontage. The Director may administratively increase the allowed wall signage when no freestanding and/or monument sign is proposed. The sign permit shall be conditioned to prohibit any future freestanding and/or monument signage due to the approved increased wall signage.

Freestanding / Monument Signs – Individual Business. One (1) on-premises freestanding / monument sign for an individual business is permitted, not to exceed the area and height limits as provided in Table 3 on Page 9. All signage over 8 ft. in height or over 32 sq. ft. in size will need engineering (IBC 2006 Section 106).

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TABLE 3 Zone	Max Sign Area	Max Sign Height	Sign Type
M-1	50 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
M-2 / M-3	75 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
C-1 / C-2 / I / P / O	75 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
M-2 / C-2 / P*	150 sq. ft.*	30 feet*	freestanding*

*Parcel is within Interstate 90 Corridor but not within the City's Interchange Corridor.

Freestanding / Monument Signs – Multiple Business. Freestanding on-premises sign(s) for multiple businesses are permitted, not to exceed the number, maximum area and height limits as provided in Table 4. Freestanding signage allowed for an individual business shall not be combined with the signage allowed for multiple businesses. Multiple businesses located on one parcel and/or within one building shall be required to utilize multiple business freestanding / monument signage standards, rather than individual business freestanding / monument signage standards. All signage over 8 ft. in height or over 32 sq. ft. in size will need engineering (IBC 2006 Section 106).

TABLE 4 Zone	Max # of Signs	Max Sign Area	Max Sign Height	Sign Type
M-1	1	75 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
M-2 / M-3	1 per street frontage	100 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
C-1 / C-2 / I / P / O	1 per street frontage	100 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
M-2 / C-2 / P*	1 per I-90 frontage*	250 sq. ft.*	30 feet*	freestanding*

* Parcel is within Interstate 90 Corridor but not within the City's Interchange Corridor.

Figure 1 – Example of maximum allowed signage on a parcel with single street frontage.

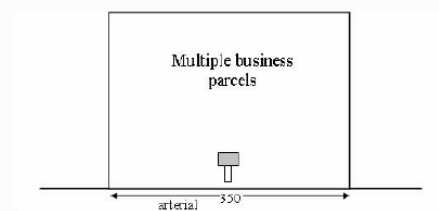
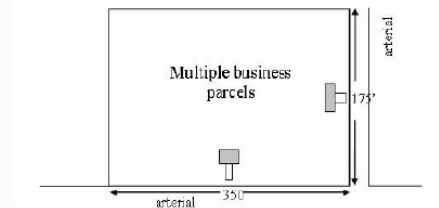


Figure 2 – Example of maximum allowed signage on a parcel with dual frontage.



Large-Scale Retail Establishments. On properties whose principal exposure is from Interstate 90 and the property does not have frontage along another public right-of-way, the allowed 300 aggregate square feet of signage can be used on any wall of the building if the following conditions are met:

1. A freestanding sign is not provided for the building or development along I-90;
2. Only 1 monument sign is provided along the access street for the building or development; and
3. The building / development signage selection is reviewed and approved by the Director of Planning & Community Development.

SIGN LOCATION, SETBACK, AREA CALCULATIONS, MAINTENANCE, & LIGHTING

Sign Location. All signs shall be so located that they:

- Do not interfere with vehicular or pedestrian accessibility or sight distance.
- Conform to the provisions of Section 10-3B-2, subsection "N", vision clearance areas.
- Do not overhang or are not located in any public right-of-way.
- All freestanding and monument signs shall be located in a maintained landscaped area.

Sign Setback. Any portion of a sign (including structural supports) that is higher than three (3) feet above grade shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet back from any public right-of-way.

Sign Area Calculations. Sign area is the total area of a sign visible from any one viewpoint or direction, excluding the sign support structure, and its size shall be calculated using the methods described in below.

- A wall sign shall be calculated by measuring the area created by drawing imaginary straight lines around the entire copy or grouping of such letters, words or symbols, and then multiplying $A \times B$ as illustrated in Figure 3 below.

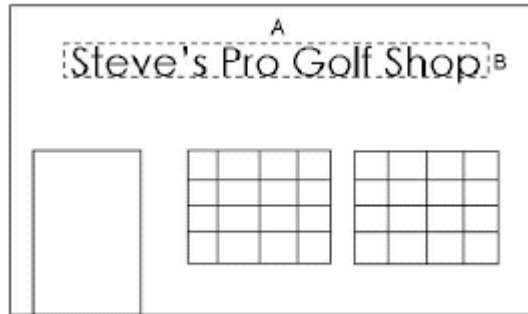


Figure 3

- The sign area of a freestanding sign consisting of one sign shall be calculated as shown in Figure 4 below. The sign area of a freestanding sign consisting of more than one (1) sign shall be computed by adding together the total area(s) of all signs as shown in Figure 5 below.

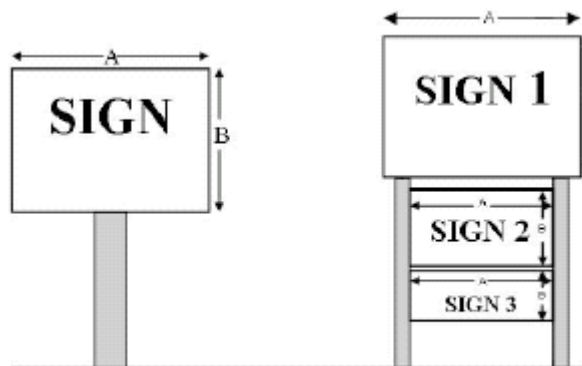
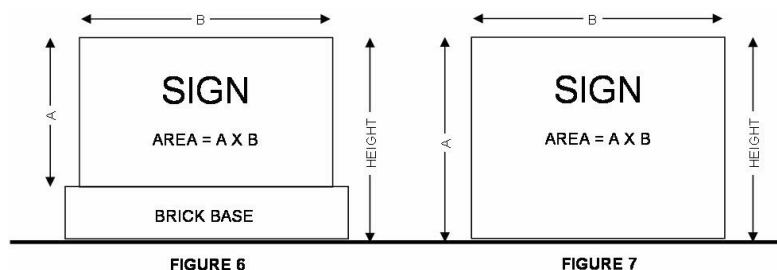


Figure 4

Figure 5

- The sign area for multiple-sided signs shall be calculated as follows:
 - The total sign area for a two-sided (back to back) sign shall be calculated using one (1) face, therefore allowing both faces to be of equal size (for example, a two-sided sign has two faces with 18 square feet per side, therefore the sign area is 18 square feet).
 - The sign area for a three-sided sign shall be equal to the total area of signage permitted for a two-sided sign, for example, in the item above, a two-sided sign is allowed 18 square feet of sign area per side which equals 36 total square feet. If a three-sided sign is used instead of a one-sided or two-sided sign, the three-sided sign may allocate the 36 total square feet among three sides, therefore allowing three sides with 12 square feet per face for a total of 36 square feet of sign area.
- The sign area of a monument sign consisting of a sign with a solid base shall be calculated as shown in Figure 6 below. The sign area of a monument sign consisting of signage within the base area shall be calculated as shown in Figure 7 below.



Maintenance of Signs. Signs that have been approved or that have been issued a permit shall be maintained by the owner or person in possession of the property on which the sign is located. Maintenance shall be such that the signage continues to conform to the conditions imposed by the sign permit.

- A damaged sign shall be repaired within thirty (30) days.
- A sign, which has been damaged, to such extent that it may pose a hazard to passersby shall be repaired or removed immediately.

Lighting. Internal and external sign illumination shall be of low intensity. External sign illumination shall be down shielded and confined to the sign to minimize impacts to the surrounding area. Illuminated Signs require an electrical permit that is obtainable from the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries.

For information on Non-Conforming Signage, please refer to the City Development Code Article 10-5C.

Please note that while every effort is made to assure the accuracy of the information contained in this brochure it is not warranted for accuracy. This document is not intended to address all aspects or regulatory requirements for a project and should serve as a starting point for your investigation.

For detailed information on a particular project, permit, or code requirement refer directly to applicable file and/or code/regulatory documents or contact City of Liberty Lake Planning & Building Services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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